



Fighting For Our Veterans, Our Troops, and Their Families

As an Army veteran of the war in Iraq, Congressman Murphy knows how important it is for Americans to respect and honor the sacrifice of all veterans. As long as Congressman Murphy is in office, he will do everything in his power to ensure that our troops, our veterans, and their families receive all the benefits and support that they have earned through their honest and faithful service to our nation.

✓ **Reaching Across Party Lines to Deliver for the Veterans of Southeastern Pennsylvania**

Successfully Fought for a National Veterans Cemetery in Bucks County

- Worked with Township Supervisors from Upper Makefield, Wrightstown, and Newtown Township as well as the Council Rock School Board and the Bucks County Director of Veterans Affairs to find an equitable agreement that ultimately allowed the VA to purchase the 205-acre Dolington property
- Joined current and former elected officials and his fellow veterans to break ground on **Washington Crossing VA National Cemetery** in November 2008
- VA anticipates that the first burials in the new cemetery will begin in late 2009. All honorably-discharged veterans and their spouses are eligible for burial

Secured a new VA Vets Center for Bucks County

- Worked with Bucks County Director of Veterans Affairs Dan Fraley to convince the VA to open a new Vets Center in Bucks County
- This center will provide readjustment counseling and services to new and existing combat veterans, and should be fully operational by Fall 2009

Challenged VA to ensure veterans are aware of state and local benefits

- Along with Mr. Fraley, convinced the VA to inform veterans of their eligibility for state and local benefits
- This will ensure that PA veterans know of important benefits, such as property tax relief for 100% disabled veterans

✓ **Passing A New GI Bill**

Original Cosponsor of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (H.R. 5740, 110th Congress)

- Allows servicemembers and veterans to receive tuition and living expenses based on the amount of active duty time served since 9/11, up to 36 months of aggregate service
- Eliminates the current Montgomery GI Bill's costly \$1200 buy-in; extends to fifteen years the amount of time veterans have to use their GI Bill benefit
- Current servicemembers may transfer benefits to family members if certain requirements are met

✓ **Increasing Funding for Veterans and Our Troops**

Voted for expanded military and veterans' funding in H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

- \$1.4 billion in funding for veterans, including over \$10.5 million for projects to improve veterans' services and facilities in Southeastern Pennsylvania
- Funds will be used to expand and improve VA facilities, send grant money to state veterans' homes, and improve information technology to get benefits to veterans more quickly
- Recovery Act also includes \$6 billion to construct and improve military hospitals, barracks, and other facilities – including local projects such as \$100,000 in new funds for the Sellersville Armory

Voted for record VA budget increases

- Voted to increase veterans' spending by a total of \$16.3 billion, representing the largest increase in the 78-year history of the VA
- These funds will reduce the claims backlog of 400,000 veterans waiting for disability and other benefits by adding more than 1,800 new claims processors in 2008 and an additional 2,000 claims processors in 2009

Voted for the National Defense Authorization Acts for 2008 and 2009

- Increases pay for servicemembers by 3.5% for 2008 and 3.9% for 2009; prohibits TRICARE fee increases; authorizes \$17.6 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicles that better protect our troops from roadside bombs
- Expands eligibility of Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) to servicemembers who were medically retired with less than 20 years of service under Chapter 61; includes TERA and TDRL retirees

✓ **Improving the Health Care of Our Troops and Our Veterans**

Voted to expand VA health care to more "Priority 8 veterans"

- The 2009 VA budget includes funds to extend VA health care eligibility to so-called "Priority 8 veterans" (medium-income veterans without a service-connected disability) whose incomes exceed the maximum threshold by 10% or less

Co-Sponsored the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act (H.R. 327, 110th Congress)

- This legislation, which became law in November 2007, develops a comprehensive program to regularly screen and monitor all veterans for risk factors of suicide and ensures that at-risk veterans receive appropriate help including 24-hour mental health care

Voted for the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act (H.R. 1538, 110th Congress)

- Improves access to quality medical care for wounded servicemembers, cuts through bureaucratic red tape and improves the transition of wounded soldiers from the Armed Forces to the Veterans Affairs system
- Creates a system of patient advocates who will fight for proper treatment and establishes a toll-free hotline for reporting deficiencies in veterans facilities
- Included as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2008

✓ **Assisting Servicemembers and Their Families**

Introduced the 21st Century Servicemembers Protection Act (H.R. 3298, 110th Congress)

- Modernizes the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to cover service contracts such as cellular phone service, car insurance, utilities, cable television, or internet access
- Allows servicemembers with deployment orders to terminate or suspend such service contracts without fee or penalty

Introduced the Hire a Hero Act (H.R.3429, 110th Congress)

- Creates a grant program through the National Guard Bureau to award grants to non-profit corporations to assist National Guardsmen, reservists, active-duty members nearing separation, and veterans in securing employment in the private sector

✓ **Fighting for Homeless Veterans**

Introduced the Helping Homeless Veterans Act (H.R.2699, 110th Congress)

- Makes permanent a program to identify service members on active duty who are at risk of becoming homeless after they are discharged or released; the program will work to prevent these members from becoming homeless
- Instructs the VA to take steps to make their homeless vets programs more accommodating for female veterans
- Portions of this bill passed the House as part of the Veterans' Health Care Improvement Act (HR 2874, 110th Congress)

Voted for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1171, 111th Congress)

- Provides services to homeless veterans with special problems such as legal issues, HIV, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder and provides them with the specialized assessment and counseling that they need
- Program has successfully provided employment to 65 percent of participating veterans

✓ **Assisting 8th District Veterans with VA and Military Problems**

Some of the ways that Congressman Murphy can help veterans, servicemembers, and their families include:

- Requesting an update on the status of a pending claim for compensation or pension from the VA;
- Requesting assistance with VA hospitals and clinics;
- Requesting official copies of a veteran's separation documents or military records from the National Personnel Records Center;
- Requesting replacement sets of medals for veterans or next of kin; and
- Requesting assistance with issues concerning military pay, bonuses, and pensions.

Please bear in mind that in order to open a case, the office requires the **written authorization** of the person directly affected, either in the form of a Privacy Act Release Form (found at <http://patrickmurphy.house.gov>) or a signed letter. If you need immediate assistance, please contact Mike Brown in our Bristol office at 215-826-1963.

Contact Congressman Murphy:

Bristol Office
414 Mill Street
Bristol, PA 19007
(215) 826-1963

Washington Office
1609 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-4276

Doylestown Office
72 North Main Street
Doylestown, PA 18901
(215) 348-1194

<http://patrickmurphy.house.gov>